

Christmas Thoughts

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Summary: Tom reflects on Christmas at two stages of his life.

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> <meta name="GENERATOR"> ChristmasthoughtsElly Disclaimer: This story is purely for fun, no money exchanged hands nor was any copyright infringement intended. The characters and story basis belong to Paramount and Viacom, while this story itself belongs to me, Elly.

Comments: This is my first work of fanfiction so all feedback is greatly appreciated, but no flames please. I dedicate this to my family who make Christmas *special* every year.

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Personal Log: Thomas Eugene Paris. Aged 15.

It's Christmas Day again. Has it really been a year since the last one? My sisters, mother and other relatives are downstairs doing Christmas stuff. I'm not sure exactly what they do: cook, talk other boring adult things. I don't know why they bother. I don't see why they don't just replicate the dinner when we get hungry. Mom's gone all natural on us. She says she wants Christmas to be special because Father's home.

Oh yeah â€" Captain Paris is home. He finally found the time to come home and see his family. He claims he's been working so hard recently because he's close to a promotion. Picture that: Admiral Paris. And of course he still has plans for me to enter the academy. I'm not sure if I really want to join Starfleet. To be honest I've never really thought about it. I don't see the point in considering the future, not when he has so many expectations for me. You know the whole 'following in your father's footsteps' thing.

At this precise moment all I want to do is sit here in my room on my own, but of course that isn't very sociable so soon I'll have Dad coming and dragging me downstairs. I wouldn't mind if I didn't have relatives from all over the galaxy here. Grandparents visiting from Mars, Great-grandparents from Vulcan, cousins from Bajor, Betazed and the list goes on. I could handle my parents' criticism, but not everyone else's. My sisters are the only ones who stick up for me, but I think they only do it to make me feel better, after all it's to them that I'm compared. It's the same every year: these relatives come along once, maybe twice, a year and they think they know me. They think they can criticize every movement or action I make, every word I utter, every look that crosses my face. It's the simple fact that this is who I am. Why can't they accept me for who I am? Will anyone ever accept me for being me?

Personal Log: Thomas Eugene Paris. Aged 30.

I remember when I was fifteen. I remember feeling like a total outcast. I hated the world, as every teenager does, but I never really outgrew it. I have a lot to thank that hatred for. Sure, it was that hatred that resurfaced after being kicked out of Starfleet and that caused me to join the Maquis and end up in prison. But you see if that hadn't happened I wouldn't be here now. Where's here, I hear you ask?

Well, here is the Starship Voyager in the Delta quadrant. The ship that I helm and that I have commanded on occasion. Who would have ever thought that me, Ensign Thomas Eugene Paris, would have this career, this life? My family was convinced that my life had been heading for complete and utter destitution. I proved them wrong, or at least if I weren't seventy thousand light years from Earth I would have. And at this rate they'll be dead before I get back show them who I am, who I really am. I used to lock myself in my room, away from all my family, concealing the real me from them. My new family accepts me for who I really am. They even accept all my mistakes, all the mistakes that my father near disowned me for.

I think it really hit me today that this is my family. The one hundred odd members of this ship are my family. We mourn together when one of us dies, we rejoice together when we welcome new people or prevail over a great enemy. I'm surprised that it took me this long to realize that this is my family. I guess it happened earlier this evening when we were all on the holodeck celebrating Christmas. It's been a bit of an odd year for me because I got demoted for doing something worthwhile. It wasn't some pointless, meaningless crusade. It was for something I believed in, something that needed my help and I was the only one willing to help. I don't mean anything against the others, nor do I blame the Captain. I did what I had to do and she did what she had to do.

Anyway, we were on the holodeck. The Doctor was over in one corner trying to explain Christmas to Seven. B'Elanna was at my side talking to Harry. Neelix and Samantha were giving their presents to Naomi while Captain Janeway, Chakotay and Tuvok were stood near the drinks laughing. As I saw Naomi's face light up in joy and everyone was smiling or laughing at some comment made I smiled. I smiled as I watched this very odd and very extended family celebrate another year of life and another year closer to home.

At first I'd been glad to be in the Delta quadrant because it

represented a new start, but now, five years later, I'm glad to be here because I have a family who accept and care for me in a way I never felt with my parents. So in that respect I thank the Caretaker for everything he's given me in the past five years.

The End.

End
file.